

## Message Text

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ACTION FBOE-00

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 SMI-01 A-01 OES-05 TRSE-00 L-02

INR-07 /026 W

----- 025649

R 051010Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8382

UNCLAS TUNIS 1322

ALSO PASS SMITHSONIAN INST FOR INFO (TO CHARLES  
BLITZER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TS AART SCUL ABLD

SUBJ: POTENTIAL GIFT TO UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

BY MRS. POE BURLING

REF: (A) STATE 027273

(B) STATE 043989

1. BLITZER HAS VISITED POST AND MADE FOLLOWING  
OBSERVATIONS:

(A) PAINTINGS APPEAR TO BE CONTEMPORARY AND  
OF DOUBTFUL ARTISTIC VALUE.

(B) OF THE ART OBJECTS, THERE MAY BE A FEW  
PIECES WHICH ARE OF INTEREST. EMBASSY HAS AGREED TO  
TAKE PHOTOS OF THESE AND SEND TO DEPT AND TO BLITZER  
FOR ARTISTIC OR HISTORICAL APPRAISAL. SMITHSONIAN  
DOES NOT GIVE MONETARY APPRAISAL OF ITEMS.

(C) BLITZER OF OPINION LIBRARY COLLECTION IS  
OF MORE INTEREST THAN ART OBJECTS AND PAINTINGS BUT  
UNCERTAIN IF COLLECTION CONTAINS ANY PARTICULAR BOOK  
WHICH COULD BE CALLED A MUSEUM PIECE. A FEW BOOKS  
HOWEVER, HE THOUGHT MIGHT BE OF HISTORICAL INTEREST  
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AND POST WILL ALSO TAKE PHOTOS OF THESE.

2. POST HAS TAKEN NOTE OF DEPT'S ADMONITION IN REFTEL (B) THAT IT IS DONOR'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE A STATEMENT OF VALUE OF PROPERTY. HOWEVER, ALTHOUGH BLITZER AND EMBOFF DISCLAIM EXPERTISE ON BOOKS, THEY THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE TO DONOR'S AND DEPT'S ADVANTAGE TO GIVE SOME KIND OF VERY ROUGH ESTIMATE. THEREFORE, THEY ESTIMATED COLLECTION MIGHT PERHAPS BE WORTH AN AVERAGE OF \$5.00 PER BOOK. THIS WOULD GIVE A ROUGH TOTAL OF \$22,835 FOR THE 4,567 BOOKS. THE SOMEWHAT LOW AVERAGE PER BOOK IS DUE TO THE LARGE NUMBER OF PAPERBOUND BOOKS IN THE COLLECTION. POST IS WRITING MRS. BURLING TO INFORM HER THAT (A) WE HAVE MADE SUCH AN ESTIMATE (WITHOUT REVEALING AMOUNT), (B) WE ARE FORWARDING OUR ESTIMATE TO DEPT, AND (C) REQUESTING SOMEONE IN DEPT TO GET IN TOUCH WITH HER TO DISCUSS SITUATION, INCLUDING ESTIMATE. POINT IS THAT MRS. BURLING NEVER HAD OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW BOOK COLLECTION HERE AS BOOKS WERE STILL PACKED UPON HER DEPARTURE FROM TUNIS. TO HELP, WE MADE ROUGH ESTIMATE FOR HER AND INVENTORIED ENTIRE COLLECTION.

3. WHEN DEPT AND MRS. BURLING AGREE ON THE ESTIMATED MONETARY APPRAISAL OF THE BOOKS, POST WOULD APPRECIATE DEPT'S APPROVAL FOR PLACING THEM IN CHANCERY LIBRARY. WE ARE ASKING MRS. BURLING IF SHE WOULD AGREE TO TURNING OVER MINOR ART OBJECTS AND PAPERBOUND BOOKS TO EMBASSY WOMEN'S CLUB FOR CHARITY PURPOSES.

4. PAINTINGS, HERE AGAIN ROUGHLY ESTIMATED BY EMBOFF, WOULD BE WORTH ABOUT \$50 EACH AND WOULD COME TO APPROXIMATELY \$1,000. WITH DEPT'S APPROVAL THESE WOULD HANG IN EMBASSY'S TOWNHOUSES AND OTHER GOVERNMENT-OWNED RESIDENCES.

5. POST UNABLE TO DETERMINE IF VINTAGE-LOOKING MAPS ARE AUTHENTIC, BUT HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THEY ARE NOT. WILL SEND PHOTOS OF THEM TO DEPT. IF THEY ARE ACCEPTED BY U.S., POST WOULD LIKE TO HANG IN CHANCERY OFFICES.

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6. A RECAP OF THE GIFT IS AS FOLLOWS:

(A) BOOKS -- ROUGH ESTIMATED VALUE - \$22,835

(B) PAINTINGS--ROUGH ESTIMATED VALUE \$1,000

(C) ART OBJECTS--VALUE UNKNOWN

(D) MAPS--VALUE UNKNOWN.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Subject:** POTENTIAL GIFT TO UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT BY MRS. POE BURLING  
**TAGS:** AART, ABLD, TS  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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